IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with strikethrough. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claims 4 and 5 without prejudice or disclaimer, ADD claim 10 and AMEND the claims in accordance with the following:

1.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A real-time contents editing method for editing a large number of images, including live images, and/ or voices which are present in a dispersed fashion on the Internet, and distributing the edited images and/or voices to a plurality of users, the method comprising:

providing a plurality of video cameras each serving as an input device, a plurality of distribution modules each adapted to code an input image taken by a corresponding video camera, by use of a coding standard which enables coding while selecting one of a plurality of coding algorithms and to distribute the coded input image, a plurality of receiving modules each adapted to receive and display the distributed image or voice distributed from the distribution modules, and at least one editing module that requests the distribution modules to distribute the image or voice to the receiving modules; and

determining the performance level of a machine to be used through measurement, in the system, of a time required for coding of a video object plane (VOP); and

causing each distribution module to change, in accordance with the performance level of a machine to be used, a the kind and use frequency of a video object plane (VOP) to be used, to thereby select a coding algorithm which enables highly efficient compression.

2.   (ORIGINAL) A real-time contents editing method according to claim 1, wherein processes for coding the input image are divided into basic processes and auxiliary processes; a coding execution time of each of the basic and auxiliary processes is measured; and the kind and use frequency of a video object plane (VOP) to be used is changed on the basis of results of the measurement.

3.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A real-time contents editing system for editing a large

number of images, including live images,~~and/~~_or voices which are present in a dispersed fashion on the Internet, and distributing the edited images ~~and/~~or voices to a plurality of users, the system comprising:

a plurality of video cameras each serving as an input device;

a plurality of distribution modules each adapted to code an input image taken by a corresponding video camera, by use of a coding standard which enables coding while selecting one of a plurality of coding algorithms and to distribute the coded input image;

a plurality of receiving modules each adapted to receive and display the ~~distributed~~ image or voice distributed from the distribution modules; and

at least one editing module that requests the distribution modules to distribute the image or voice to the receiving modules,

wherein the performance level of a machine to be used is determined through measurement, in the system, of a time required for coding of a video object plane (VOP), and

wherein each distribution module changes, in accordance with the performance level~~of a machine to be used~~, ~~a~~the kind and use frequency of a video object plane (VOP) to be used, to thereby select a coding algorithm which enables highly efficient compression.

4-5.   (CANCELLED)

6.   (ORIGINAL) A real-time contents editing system according to claim 3, wherein the coding standard is the MPEG-4 standard.

7.   (ORIGINAL) A real-time contents editing system according to claim 3, wherein the editing module is adapted to request a distribution server to multicast the images and/or voices, and is adapted to generate and multicast a scene description language to be transmitted to a plurality of clients.

8.   (ORIGINAL) A real-time contents editing system according to claim 3, wherein the coding process according to the selected coding algorithm is carried out in a step-by-step manner such that required minimum coding is completed after lapse of a predetermined time, whereupon an auxiliary coding process of enhanced resolution and compression rate is carried out; and if a relevant auxiliary coding process is not completed when a limited period of time has elapsed, the auxiliary coding process is interrupted, and the result of the coding process in an immediately preceding step is distributed.

9: (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer-readable medium storing a real-time contents editing program for editing a large number of images, including live images, and/ or voices which are present in a dispersed fashion on the Internet, and distributing the edited images and/or voices to a plurality of users, the program being adapted to a system comprising a plurality of video cameras each serving as an input device, a plurality of distribution modules each adapted to code an input image taken by a corresponding video camera by use of a coding standard which enables coding while selecting one of a plurality of coding algorithms and to distribute the coded input image, a plurality of receiving modules each adapted to receive and display the distributed image or voice distributed from the distribution modules, and at least one editing module that requests the distribution modules to distribute the image or voice to the receiving modules, the program causing a computer to execute a method comprising: and

determining the performance level of a machine to be used through measurement, in the system, of a time required for coding of a video object plane (VOP); and

the program causing each distribution module to change, in accordance with the performance level of a machine to be used, a the kind and use frequency of a video object plane (VOP) to be used, to thereby select a coding algorithm which enables highly efficient compression.

10. (NEW) An apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of video units as input devices, the video units collecting data containing at least one of voice or image data;

a plurality of distribution units, each distribution unit being adapted to code input data captured by a respective video unit, the coding units using one of a plurality of coding algorithms to code the data;

a plurality of receiving units, each receiving unit adapted to operably present the coded data received from a respective distribution unit; and

an editing unit that requests the distribution units to distribute coded data to the respective receiving unit, the editing unit determining the performance level of a distribution unit by measuring the time required for coding of a video object plane and, in response thereto, causing the distribution unit to select a coding algorithm in accordance with the performance level, thereby facilitating efficient data compression.